

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request that this Preliminary Amendment be entered by the Examiner. By the foregoing amendment, claims 3-9, 11-13, 15 and 17-21 are sought to be amended. Claims 22 and 23 are sought to be canceled. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.


Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claim 1-21 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 16 being the independent claims.

Applicants respectfully request that this Preliminary Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 be entered by the Examiner. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Version with markings to show changes made

In the claims:

Please substitute the following claim 3 for the pending claim 3:

3. (once amended) A process according to claim 1 [or claim 2] wherein the crosslinking is effected by means of two or more different bonds selected from the group consisting of ether, ester, sulfone, amine, imino and amide bonds.

Please substitute the following claim 4 for the pending claim 4:

4. (once amended) A process according to [any of claims 1 to 3] claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the cross-linking agent is selected from the group consisting of formaldehyde, gluteraldehyde, divinyl sulfone, a polyanhydride, a polyaldehyde, a polyhydric alcohol, carbodiimide, epichlorohydrin, ethylene glycol diglycidylether, butanediol diglycidylether, polyglycerol polyglycidylether, polyethylene glycol diglycidylether, polypropylene glycol diglycidylether, [or] and a bis-or poly-epoxy cross-linker.

Please substitute the following claim 5 for the pending claim 5:

5. (once amended) A process according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 4] wherein an ether bond is formed using a crosslinking agent selected from the group consisting of bis epoxides and poly epoxides under alkaline conditions.

Please substitute the following claim 6 for the pending claim 6:

6. (once amended) A process according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 4] wherein an ester bond is formed using a crosslinking agent selected from the group consisting of bis epoxides and poly epoxides under acidic conditions.

Please substitute the following claim 7 for the pending claim 7:

7. (once amended) A process according to claim 5 [or claim 6] wherein the crosslinker is selected from the group consisting of 1,2,3,4-diepoxylbutane and 1,2,7,8-diepoxylactane.

Please substitute the following claim 8 for the pending claim 8:

8. (once amended) A process according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 4] wherein an ether bond is formed using a glutaraldehyde cross-linking agent under acidic conditions.

Please substitute the following claim 9 for the pending claim 9:

9. (once amended) A process according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 8] wherein the crosslinking of each type of functional group is effected sequentially.

Please substitute the following claim 11 for the pending claim 11:

11. (once amended) A process according to claim 9 [or claim 10] wherein HA is first cross-linked via the hydroxyl groups by formation of ether bonds and subsequently cross-linked via the carboxyl groups by formation of ester bonds.

Please substitute the following claim 12 for the pending claim 12:

12. (once amended) A process according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 8] wherein the crosslinking of each type of functional group is effected simultaneously.

Please substitute the following claim 13 for the pending claim 13:

13. (once amended) A process according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 12] for preparing double crosslinked HA.

Please substitute the following claim 15 for the pending claim 15:

15. (once amended) Multiple cross-linked HA obtainable by a process according to [any of claims] claim 1 [to 14].

Please substitute the following claim 17 for the pending claim 17:

17. (once amended) Cross-linked HA according to claim 15 [or claim 16] wherein the crosslinking bonds are [selected from] two or more selected from the group consisting of ether, ester, sulfone, amine, imino and amide bonds.

Please substitute the following claim 18 for the pending claim 18:

18. (once amended) Multiple cross-linked HA according to [any of claims] claim 15 [to 17] in the form of a film.

Please substitute the following claim 19 for the pending claim 19:

19. (once amended) Multiple cross-linked HA according to [any of claims] claim 15 [to 17] in the form of a gel.

Please substitute the following claim 20 for the pending claim 20:

20. (once amended) HA according to [any of claims] claim 15 [to 19] which is double cross linked HA.

Please substitute the following claim 21 for the pending claim 21:

21. (once amended) A product comprising multiple cross-linked HA according to [any of claims] claim 15 [to 20].

[illegible]